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OLGA.

A FIVE ACT DRAMA.

✓
BY H. ALLEN AND C. CAMPBELL.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1885, by
H. ALLEN AND C. CAMPBELL,
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SAN FRANCISCO:
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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

MONS. LE PEON.

MADAM LE PEON.

OLGA LE PEON.

FLORETTA, (Olga's Maid.)

MADAM CARGNAC, (Olga's Nurse.)

JOSEPH, (Servant.)

COUNT STORELKI, (Grand Duke's Confidential Servant.)

GRAND DUKE ALEXIS }

CZAR OF RUSSIA. }

CZARINA OF RUSSIA.

DR. LANCEROFF.

NIHILIST NO. I.

COUNT BUBBLEOFF, (Captain of Guard.)

COUNT NICHOLOFF, (Commander-in-Chief of Army.)

COUNT STIVOLI, (Clerk of Military Tribunal.)

COUNT PAVILICHI, (Member of Military Tribunal.)

COUNT KURKO, (Member of Military Tribunal.)

ATKINS MALCOLM, (Clerk in British Diplomatic office.)

JOHN SILVER, (Clerk in American Diplomatic office.)

LORD BELL, (British Ambassador at St. Petersburg.)

COUNT VON WANGHEIM, (German Ambassador at St. Petersburg.)

COUNT MELIKOFF, (Minister of War.)

COUNT SKOBELOFF, (Minister of Foreign Affairs.)

AIDE-CAMP.

SOLDIERS, ETC.

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OLGA !

A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS.

—:O:—

ACT I.

SCENE—Parlor in the mansion of Mons. Le Peon, in Paris.

Enter Madam Le Peon, [L. U. E.] with open letter in hand.

MADAM LE PEON. (C.) Villain of villains ! [Stamping her foot]. Coward of cowards ! This man, this wolf, clothed in the skin of a lamb, enters my house as a favored guest, and throwing his winning manners aside, shows his diabolical nature ! The gentleman born, but devil incarnate ! Oh, what a pride ! What a noble figure he will look seated on his throne, surrounded by his courtiers ! He, the despoiler of my child's happiness—my only child, my Olga. Oh, Almighty God ! let not such villains live ! Show that thou, and thou alone, can protect the innocent, and cut such fiends short in their career ! Follow him with just and awful vengeance ! Oh, Olga, Olga ! when your father hears of his loved daughter's dishonor, what will he say ? Great God in heaven, give me strength to break this awful news to my husband ! The blow will be terrible ! His declining years bereft of the comfort and happiness due his old and honorable age ! May God forgive you, Olga ! [Goes to retire, and as approaches the door]. Here he comes, her father ! What shall I do ? Heaven direct me !

Enters Mons. Le Peon [L. C.]

MONS. LE PEON. (L. C.) Where's—Why ! What's the matter ? What has happened ? Is Olga ill ? You with tears in your eyes ! There must be something wrong ! Tell me the trouble ; be it ever so bad, I will share it with thee !

MADAM LE PEON. Victor, Victor ! Must this come to you in your old age. Must dishonor come to us when we are about ripe for the grave ? And must this dishonor be brought by our only ---, Oh, God ! Spare a mother's breaking heart ! [Bursts into tears, and sinks in chair. R. C.]

MONS. LE PEON. [Approaching.] What does this mean ? What is this dishonor ? No one would dishonor Victor Le Peon ! All France would cry, shame !

MADAM LE PEON. Read ! Read his letter ! The villain's letter !

MONS. LE PEON. "My darling Olga." This belongs to Olga.

MADAM LE PEON. Read ! It explains all ! [Rises and retires up stage.]

MONS LE PEON. (C.) "My darling Olga, I received your kind and affectionate letter of the 27th inst., and make haste to reply. You ask me to fulfill my promise to marry you, and thus hide your disgrace. For my own sake, I would willingly do so, but at present there are obstacles which compel me to abandon such a proceeding. When I become Emperor of Russia, I will do all that lies in my power to make you happy. Your child, if it lives, will be provided for. Adieu, my darling Olga. Alexis."

MONS. LE PEON. [Repeat slow.] My God! Has he betrayed my child? Has he sullied his name by bringing dishonor and the deepest disgrace on a family who welcomely received him as their guest? [Turns to Madam Le Peon] Tell me, wife, is it true? Has this future king, this emperor, dared to dishonor us and our daughter? Tell me! You answer not! Then by the God of Heaven! if this letter is truth, not all the soldiers of his empire, his wealth, his every atonement will protect him from a father's vengeance. Where is Olga? She shall answer! [Kings bell, servant answers.], Send Olga at once! [Servant bows and retires.] He who ruins Victor Le Peon's love and hope lives but to die an ignominious death!

Enter Olga L. C. and falls on her knees before her father.

OLGA LE PEON. Father, forgive me.

MONS LE PEON. Great God! Then it is true! He, by crafty subtleness has brought reproach upon my only child! [Pause.] You, [With feeling.] who have been my hope, my joy, my life, have fallen a prey to the insatiable devilment of this villain! Girl! Do you not know that the finger of scorn will be pointed at your mother and father! [Softly.] You over whom we have watched, through sickness and through childhood; over whom we have doated and cried! [Passionately.] May the curse of hell rest on him, and may you who WAS ONCE my daughter be ---. [Madam Le Peon runs forward and places her hand on his lips.]

MADAM LE PEON. She has sinned, which cannot now be helped! Heap on him who has wronged her, your curses, but spare, oh spare, our child! Oh, Victor, Victor, let us forgive her! Forgive her, my husband! On my knees I plead her forgiveness. [Kneels.] Oh, Victor, Victor!—

MONS. LE PEON. Rise wife! I forgive our child; but by the cross and the altar, I swear to be avenged on her betrayer! [Retires up stage.]

MADAM LE PEON. Rise, Olga, darling! [Madam Le Peon lifts and places Olga on sofa.] There! [Kisses.] May you live to bless us both! Come, Victor! [Exit Madam and Mons. Le Peon. C.]

OLGA. [On her knees.] Father in Heaven, forgive my sin!

Enter Olga's nurse—Madam Cargnac. R.

MADAM CARGNAC. [Approaching Olga.] Olga, darling, [Looks in face.] Why! what's the matter? What ails you child? Crying! come now, wipe the tears away, and be yourself again! [Olga gives nurse letter.] Me to read this? [Reads letter.] My God! My darling's life blighted by such a scoundrel! Well may her mother weep; her father's cheek blanch, and his noble frame bow with agony! Well may —.

OLGA. [Rising.] Nurse! Oh, nurse, heap not more misery on my head! Pity me! Show me how to avenge my disgrace and my father and mother's

dishonor ! Oh, nurse ! if you love me, save me this reproach ! [Falls on knees beseechingly].

MADAM CARGNAC. 'Love you, my child ? I will always love you.

OLGA. But my father ?

MADAM CARGNAC. He will love you too. Come, cheer up, darling.

OLGA. No ! nurse, that can never be. I have dishonored his name.

MADAM CARGNAC. Olga, a father's love for his child is greater than for his honored name.

OLGA. Nurse, leave me. You cannot help me.

MADAM CARGNAC. Olga, child, do you think I will reproach you, and make your fair young life as a blighted flower ? No, darling, my love was always great for you, but it will be boundless in the future. For that man, my curse is on him. Him, the future king of Russia ? His child may be ruler of his empire, whilst you may live to be his wife.

[Olga rises quickly to her feet as if struck with suddenly revealed thought, and grasps nurse by hand. c.]

OLGA. Nurse ! do you believe in the sudden change of destinies ? Do you believe that outraged nature can live another life ? That death is fearless to it ? From this time forth my life is changed. A few days ago I was the guileless, innocent child. Now I am the hardened and wronged woman. Him, I now loathe, but for my father and mother's sake he SHALL be my husband. Wronged woman's crafty mind is still more than a match for the villainous devices of such scoundrels. At my feet he shall plead for mercy, and no mercy shall be shown him. He may seek my love, but no love will he receive. My hand he shall accept in marriage, but this heart will be as stone. No ! I am the child no longer. My time has come, and I will now pursue the path of vengeance until I lay him dead and mangled at my feet. Woman's love is great, but her revenge is swift and sure. A coward he lives, and a coward he dies. Nurse, listen ! By the love of my father and mother I swear never to rest this right hand until my disgrace is avenged. May I be cursed, and this hand wither at my side if I falter in this duty !

Enter Mons. and Madam Le Peon. (c.)

MONS. LE PEON. Olga !

OLGA. [Turning startingly.] Father ! Mother !

MONS. LE PEON. There, my child, we will speak of this no more ; we will not think of the past. We love you still.

OLGA. Oh ! dearest father, you tell me to blot out the past ! Never can it be obliterated from my memory. My shame is patent to the world.

MADAM LE PEON. Come, now, my child, do not grieve so. Let us picture to ourselves the happy future.

OLGA. Oh ! mother, mother ! How can I think of happiness ? My future is dark and dangerous. There are many obstacles in my path, which I must overcome.

MONS. LE PEON. What do you mean ? What obstacles ? What dangers ?

OLGA. I cannot tell. Could I see them, or know when and where they would appear, my task would be most easy.

MADAM CARGNAC. Come, Olga, you are ill.

OLGA. Yes, nurse, I am ill—in mind! Oh! leave me, leave me! No one loves me now!

MADAM LE PEON. [Approaching and taking Olga's hand.] Olga! do you believe we do not love you? Do you think that your mother's heart is hardened against you? No, Olga! you must not believe us so cruel!

OLGA. [Clasping her mother's neck.] Mother, you have always loved me, but all this love has changed. I know it! It must be! I have become as one without hope; without love. A very outcast!

MONS. LE PEON. Now, Olga, let that be the last. Forget your wrongs. We love and pity you.

OLGA. Pity me? Am I to be pitied? Pitied by my father? Has compassion taken the place of love? Oh! father, father!

MONS. LE PEON. Why, Olga, what do you mean? You must not be so foolish. Live to become a noble woman. Be a joy and pride to us all.

OLGA. Such a life is impossible. Revenge will be my future life. All do I forsake for it.

MADAM LE PEON. Olga, do not act so! Forget and forgive?

OLGA. [Startlingly.] I will be revenged! You mother, tell me to forget and forgive? Never! As long as I have breath I will curse him. Has he not wronged me? Go! You are not mother.

MONS. LE PEON. Girl! [approaching.] Are you mad? Do you understand what you are saying? Do as your mother desires!

OLGA. Father! Mother! [Drawing back.] (Slowly.) What do you mean? Have you forgotten? Tell me! I will —.

MADAM CARGNAC. Olga, Olga! Now do not get excited. Come! [Approaching.]

OLGA. Back! Away! Leave me! You hate me. I know it. I am mad! Mad! Oh! save me! Save me! [Falls on sofa weeping.]

MADAM CARGNAC. [Approaching Olga.] Dear child, weep! Your time will come. Fear not!

MONS. LE PEON. Olga, my child, you must forget the past. This —

OLGA. [Rising suddenly.] Away! Begone! You love me not! Speak not of forgiveness! Ha-ha! Ha-ha! I will have him in my power! Go!

MADAM LE PEON. Olga, child, my child! [Running to clasp Olga.]

OLGA. No, no! I am dead to you. Leave me!

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE 1—Olga's boudoir in Mons. Le Peon's mansion in suburbs of Paris.

OLGA. [Reposing on sofa.] They say I am changed; so altered as to be scarcely recognizable. Did they expect otherwise? Have they no respect? Have they no sympathy for me? None! I cannot hope for it. But the day is fast approaching when I will have my solemn revenge, and punish this scoundrel fourfold for his perfidy. [Rises and walks towards mirror. R.] A tinge of gray is trifling with my hair; the furrows on my brow indicate not age, but sorrow; my sunken eyes denote sad thought. Still, I feel my blood burning for the revenge so justly its due. [R. C.] Oh! how I long for the old love of my father and mother, but yearn in vain! [Sinks in chair.]

Enter Servant.

SERVANT. A paper, madam. [Retires.]

OLGA. What does this mean? [Opening paper.] What's this? "Birth of a son to the Grand Duchess Alexis!" I am lost! My child's hopes are blasted! Now he will never keep his promise! Oh, God! how hard thy hand appears to weigh on me. Help and guide me. Will he fulfill his promise? [Rises.] Yes! he SHALL! Let him fail, and I, who am already wronged, will then be doubly wronged. Restless I remain until I meet him face to face. If he discards me, I will kill him. Words cannot picture the contempt I have for such as he. Hate is as nothing compared to the hatred I feel toward this man. Let him come and he will find me the gentle lamb in outward appearance, but with the smothered rage of the foiled lioness within. My game will be deep and carefully planned. Should failure result, it will be by the grace of God that he should live. His promise may be broken, but my oath to be revenged, never! His last letter stated that within six days he hoped to be here. I will wait.

Enter Servant.

SERVANT. Madam, a letter. The gentleman waits an answer.

OLGA. I will ring. [Servant retires.] What is this? The Russian seal! Is it fatal or otherwise? [Breaks seal.] "Darling Olga; the bearer of this letter, Count Storelki, my trusted and confidential servant, will receive your answer as to whether you will be able to meet me this evening, when I purpose fulfilling my promise to you. With greatest love for you, my darling. Alexis." There is very little time to consider. I will see this Count Storelki. [Rings bell, servant appears.] Show the gentleman in. [Enter Count Storelki c. bowing. Servant retires.] Welcome, Sir Count. His royal highness has made you the honored bearer of a letter to your obedient servant, and has deigned for an answer. In that letter his highness intimated that he will be in Paris to-night. Are you aware of the contents of his highness' letter?

COUNT STORELKI. Yes, Mlle. Le Peon, his royal highness DID inform me of his intentions. Pray may I receive an answer?

OLGA. Excuse me, my lord, I am so happy at receiving his royal highness' letter that I have forgotten the honor due your position. Pray be seated. [R.C.]

COUNT STORELKI. (L. C.) Thank you, Mlle. I am glad to hear that the Prince's letter has pleased you.

OLGA. By to-day's paper I notice an heir has been born to your royal master. Undoubtedly the Grand Duke will be pleased?

COUNT STORELKI. Certainly, your ladyship.

OLGA. [Aside.] I dislike this man. [Aloud.] But his highness' letter; is it imperative that I should give you an answer at once? Could you call later, and without fail it will be awaiting you?

COUNT STORELKI. [Rising.] I will return, Mlle. Such delicate subjects for the ladies must be seriously considered. Before going, Mlle. Le Peon, I wish to impress upon you that his royal highness hopes no person other than your family will be aware of his presence in Paris. It would be injudicious. Mlle. au revoir. [Exit C.]

OLGA. So that is Count Storelki, the confidential servant of the Grand Duke! I do not like him. It is the old saying: "crime travels in pairs." I must be careful of that man. He watches me with suspicious eyes. He has been blinded this time, but I will watch him in the future. Come what may, my noble lord, thy wife this night I shall be, and before God and witnesses you shall be my husband. My father will object, but I must win him round. I will see him. [Kings, servant enters.] Is my father in his study?

SERVANT. Your father, Mlle., has been asking for you.

OLGA. Tell him then, that I will speak to him. [Retires servant.] Mother will not object if father gives his consent, and to that he must. If not — [Enter Mons. Le Peon. C. Olga approaching him.] Dear old father; after all there are none like you and mother.

MONS. LE PEON. Well, darling child, your servant says you want to talk me to sleep.

OLGA. No, father, I want to give you news, glorious news! but you must promise NOT to object to my request.

MONS. LE PEON. Your father will give you all you may wish, darling, but he will make no rash promises. What is it, child?

OLGA. Father, [Pause.] I know you object. Listen to me. In that room sleeps a child, who will some day be the ruler of Russia; its mother is no wedlocked wife; on its fair innocent brow is marked the stain of shame; over its mother's head hangs the fallen sword of deep disgrace. An offer has been made to avert this awful doom, and —

MONS. LE PEON. [Rising.] Child, stay that idle prattle! Let the past be buried. Raise not those memories which are hateful to us all. [Reproachingly.] Have I not already spoken distinctly upon that subject? Why so cruel? Why so inconsiderate? Never speak to me —

OLGA. Father! do you not think I suffer by recalling the past? Do you not think I feel the degrading load upon my shoulders? Do you believe I am forgetful of my wrongs? As you swore to have revenge, so did I take oath as solemn. Do you believe I still love him? No! I despise the coward, and it is his cowardice which brings him to my feet, craving to be my husband. Oh! sweet revenge! [Affectionately.] Father, consent to my marriage to this man to-night.

MONS. LE PEON. [In astonishment.] Woman! Child no longer! Why such hatred and such wish to be this man's wife? Have [Looking fixedly at her.] you become —! No, no! You could never be steeled in crime! Never! Is he in Paris?

OLGA. Read his letter. [Mons. Le Peon reads letter.]

MONS. LE PEON. Well, have you answered it?

OLGA. No sir, I have not, knowing the objections you have to this man. Give me your consent for my marriage; your hand as a witness, and let providence guide me in the rest. Father, consent, and I will show the world that Olga Le Peon is still a woman.

MONS. LE PEON. Daughter, I hate the man, but as you wish it, for your child's sake, I will be present as a witness to this too late atonement.

OLGA. [Throwing her arms round him.] Father I thank and love you. Dearer and dearer you both become to me every day. Soon we will be parted, maybe to meet no more. May God bless you both, and heaven help me to redress your wrongs. [Kisses him.] Tell mother what has happened. I will write my answer,

MONS. LE PEON. May you never live to repent this rash act. God bless you! [Retires. c.]

OLGA. Poor old father! I must hurry, for this servant will be here for his answer, and HE SHALL RECEIVE IT. Yes, get it. [Rings bell, servant enters.] Tell nurse to come to me. [Servant retires.] This letter will be short and sweet, unlike his life which will be long and miserable. [Writes note.]

Enter Madam Cargnac. (L. c.)

MADAM CARGNAC. Well, darling, what's the matter?

OLGA. Read this letter.

MADAM CARGNAC. [Reads Alexis' letter.] Him here? Is he not ashamed to show his face? Have you accepted his offer? What are you going to do?

OLGA. [Rising.] Marry him, and be the curse of his life. His servant will call for my answer; here it is. Do not let him question Floretta or the servants. My marriage takes place this evening. You will be witness with my parents, but not one person in this house must know. He will leave immediately after the wedding. Get everything ready, and appear happy, for his messenger is watching us. [Going.]

MADAM CARGNAC. Well, my child, this beats everything.

OLGA. You remember my vow?

MADAM CARGNAC. Yes.

OLGA. I now see my way to fulfill it. I will need your help.

MADAM CARGNAC. And most willingly I give it.

OLGA. Come, I will go and see mother, and you at once look to my dress. [Both retire.]

Enter Floretta with Joseph, servant. (c.)

FLORETTA. Now, Mr. Joe, you be kind enough to attend to your duties, and leave my young mistress' private business alone.

JOSEPH. Look here, Floretta, I was attending to duties in the hall, and

although I did place my ear to the key-hole, I could not keep Mlle. Olga's conversation out.

FLORETTA. Don't you feel ashamed of yourself? Go! Leave me! I could never love you.

JOSEPH. Floretta, forgive me. I will never do it again.

FLORETTA. No! You are beneath my notice! You gossip; you eavesdropper; Begone!

JOSEPH. And what are you, eh?

FLORETTA. Begone, sir! [Exit Joseph. c.] What an impudent fellow. I came to light the candles, and talking to that fool, nearly made me forget them. [Lighting.] No doubt there is some mischief in the wind this evening, as nurse and Olga are in close conversation; Mons. Le Peon has a black cloud on his face, and his wife is weeping. That looks cheerful; something of the old days again. [Exit R. c.]

Enter Alexis and Olga. (c.)

ALEXIS. Darling, at last we are united. You are now my wife; our child, a lasting bond between us. A few minutes more and I must be speeding as fast as fleet horses can take me, back to my father's palace. You, my ever darling, must remain until I prepare for you.

OLGA. Ah! dear, are we to part so soon? Why not take me with you? I can not be parted from you! Take me with you; do, dear.

ALEXIS. It is impossible.

OLGA. No, dear, let me come. Do!

ALEXIS. If you wish, follow me a week hence; but you must leave the child behind.

OLGA. Why?

ALEXIS. You see, darling Olga, that you could not live in the palace with the child. Until you get things settled, he had better remain with your parents. Is that not best?

Enter Count Storelki. (c.)

COUNT STORELKI. The carriage is waiting, your highness. [Retires.]

ALEXIS. Here, love, let me place this ring on your finger, and by simply showing it on arrival at the Russian frontier, or in any portion of my father's dominions, no person will molest you. Command, and it will be done. Now, good-bye! [Kisses, exit. c.]

OLGA. I have mounted one step at last! What a hypocrite I have been. Does he believe I love him? This cold hardened heart of mine hates him, despises him! I have him in my power at last. He thinks I will leave my child behind. Never! A mother's love is greater than her wrong. His child WILL SUCCEED HIM. He will live to curse the day he wedded me, and I will live to gloat over his dying moments.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE 1—Count Storelki's Chamber in Winter Palace at St. Petersburg.

SCENE 2—Corridor in Winter Palace.

SCENE 3—Banquet Hall in Winter Palace.

SCENE 1—COUNT STORELKI'S CHAMBER.

COUNT STORELKI. [Sitting.] I am at a loss to understand why his majesty ever married such a woman. If she does not make him stoop to her, I am sadly mistaken. What eyes she has—keen, coal black! Ones which never dim. I won't interfere with that property, and there are few in this palace who will care to cross her path. Her maid, I consider a sweet young lady, and no doubt is admitted to her mistress' confidence. I must look to this maid for all the necessary information regarding her mistress' movements. However, I will consult his majesty, whom I expect momentarily. [Rising.] Ah, here he comes! [Approaches door. L. E.] Hullo! How did you come here?

Enter Floretta.

FLORETTA. (L. E.) What part of this exposition am I in, sir? I have lost my way. Why don't you name the streets?

COUNT STORELKI. You are in the east wing of the Winter Palace. Pray be seated. I am alone, and have a few minutes to spare.

FLORETTA. [Sitting.] Well, you look lonely! Every time I see you I pity your loneliness! Why don't you get married?

COUNT STORELKI. [Laughingly.] Get married? No, no, my dear young lady! I see enough of wives without being caught having one. I don't like the women —

FLORETTA. Good-bye, sir! [Going.]

COUNT STORELKI. Stop! stop! Where are you going?

FLORETTA. I don't like the men. Good —

COUNT STORELKI. But there is always an exception. Besides, you would not allow me to finish. Come, stay! I like your company.

FLORETTA. [Returning.] Oh, then, I'll forgive you! Men who hate the ladies, despise all that is fair and lovely on this earth.

COUNT STORELKI. [Aside.] I wonder what she's after? [To Floretta.] Without doubt, my dear Miss, that is the case; but how can I love the ladies when the ladies don't love me? Do you know you are the first lady who has ever entered this room?

FLORETTA. Then I intrude. I will go. [Going.]

COUNT STORELKI. No, no! Stay. Your presence here appears to dispel the monotony of this room. That pretty, winning smile lightens the darkness of the inmost recesses of my heart. How proud the man will be who claims you for his wife. By St. Peter, you are the prettiest lady in this palace!

FLORETTA. [Aside.] He thinks me a simpleton.

COUNT STORELKI. If it were not for my being master-in-waiting to his majesty, I would be yours at your command.

FLORETTA. Thank you, most noble Count, but that can never be. I do not believe in flattery. Like most of the men I fear you praise the ladies in their presence, and decry them when away.

COUNT STORELKI. I see you hate the men as well as I dislike——

FLORETTA. I do not hate the men, sir, but I despise false flatterers. [Rising.] Kindly show me the way to my mistress' apartments.

COUNT STORELKI. Although I understand you are prejudiced towards me, yet, my dear Mlle., I will comply. Allow me. [Offering arm.]

FLORETTA. [Drawing back.] Excuse me, my arm is not tired. I will follow. [Aside.] He's a dangerous man. [Exit Count Storelki and Floretta. c.]

Enter Olga. (R. E.)

OLGA. This is the Count's room, and here his majesty is to meet him. Floretta succeeded in drawing him out. Do they believe no listeners will be near? Let them scheme to kill me, but they will not succeed. His perfidy is worthy of the man. He commands me to accept the arm of Count Storelki as escort to the banquet in honor of his wife's birthday. He considers me a fool; a child. We shall see. Some person comes. I'll hide here. [Hides behind curtain.]

Enter Count Storelki and Czar. (L. E.)

COUNT STORELKI. Yes, your majesty, I must own she has become an obstacle in your way; but what are you to do? To exile her is impossible, owing to the influence of her father in France. To send her away is to disgrace your imperial name. To suggest some quick means to rid your majesty of this woman is beyond my power: but my hand, my sword, my life is at your command, most high and mighty Czar. To command is thine, to do is mine!

CZAR. [Melancholy.] Well, my dear Count, I can make no suggestion. To deal with two wives is a greater difficulty than directing my government. Why was not man born to overcome such difficulties? In woman's hands man is as a mouse in a cat's paw! She plays with him; teases him; quarrels with him, and when tired of him, kills him! This woman is a devil in female form. Her laugh is devilish; her talk sarcastic, and her look so fearful that it makes my blood curdle in my very veins. [Rising.] Rid me of her Count, and the fairest province in Russia will be yours. Use any and every means, but for my sake, destroy this canker which is wasting my life. [Whispering.] Kill her!

COUNT STORELKI. [Astonished.] Your majesty says, kill her! Do you command, serene Czar?

CZAR. [Softly.] Hush! Let her die of slow poison, so as not to raise suspicion, and be careful of your means. [Aloud.] Let us prepare for the banquet. You act as knight to Olga. Raise no suspicion! [Exeunt. L. E.]

Olga comes out from hiding place.

OLGA. Oh, miserable coward! My death is to be added to your black soul—my blood to stain your crimson hands! No! At this banquet shall your hellish

hand show its work. You base intriguer! Too cowardly to attempt to carry out your infernal designs, you must employ kind. Unworthy monarch of so great a people. My death may come, but never from your hands. Here are poisons of great subtlety. [Producing case of poison.] These will end your compeer's life. Your queen will die the lingering consumptive, but mystery will enshroud her death! Already my son occupies your heir's place! Some one comes! [Hides.]

Enter Floretta. (L. E.)

FLORETTA. It is near time for the banquet and her ladyship not dressed! Here's a flare up this time. Oh, my! I wonder where she is? I'm tired of this life. That American diplomatic clerk nearly drives me mad. I wonder where her ladyship is? [Exit. R.]

Enter Count Storelki and Murderer. (L. E.)

COUNT STORELKI. Now, my man, sit down. I understand you can be bought for money? [Murderer nods.] Are you willing to earn 1,000 roubles for a night's work?

MURDERER. On one condition; that you pay me half before I commence the work, and the remainder immediately after I finish.

COUNT STORELKI. You can have your terms. Are you satisfied?

MURDERER. I am, sir. Tell me what is to be done?

COUNT STORELKI. Be careful, for my hand will reach you if failure results. No accomplice must be with you. No person is to be sharer of your secret, and the work must be skilfully executed. Do you understand? [Nods.] Well, so far good. In this palace we have a woman who has gone mad, and threatens his majesty's life. She, we are determined to dispose of, and as you have been recommended as one expert in such delicate matters, I have called in your services. After the banquet to-night I will meet you on the Prospect, and lead you to her room. If I do not appear, consider the case as postponed for the present, but hold yourself in readiness when required. Now, my good man, take this money as a forfeit, and when your work is finished I will complete your demands. Be careful.

MURDERER. [Rising.] Sir, I have disposed of several persons for this palace. I never ask questions, and never allow others! Lead the way. [Aside.] Those who befriend the murderer often are murdered first. [Exit both. C. E. Olga returns.]

OLGA. Can sane woman's nerves stand this strain? I feel as if a mighty power pulses through my veins, and gives to my faltering heart the renewed life of steadfast determination. My death by him has been fixed for this night. The silence of the midnight hour is to be broken by the murderer's hands twined round my neck. Great God! must this be so? No, no! Well said the murderer: "Those who befriend the enemy of God and man often are his first prey!" You, base Count, shall be the first victim, and by my hand! At this banquet tragedy will enact a part understood by none. I go to prepare to accompany you to its table, from which your body will be carried a lifeless mass. [Exit. R.]

SCENE 2—CORRIDOR.

Enter Silver and Malcolm in quest of Count Storelki. (L.)

SILVER. This is the way to the Count's room, I guess, but if he don't happen to be at home, what'll we do? Remain until he arrives?

MALCOLM. Certainly not. We are already intruders. You have an invitation to the banquet this evening, so have I, and undoubtedly we will find means of communicating with him regarding this Nihilistic plot against his life.

SILVER. Why don't they start a republic, and be done with this plotting business? Kings are fools to raise —

MALCOLM. Now, hold that nonsense! Do you understand into which net we are getting? for if we are being fooled we'll have to cut the country. I think we had better remain quiet a while longer. What think you?

SILVER. What'll become of us if we get caught?

MALCOLM. Sent to Siberia.

SILVER. Eh? Siberia! The Czar will be blowed up before I'll go to Siberia! Come, let us present our credentials. No Siberia for me! Not by heaps of Czars! [Exit R.]

SCENE 3—BANQUET HALL.

[The guests are in two lines, and the Czar and Czarina enter, followed by Count Storelki and Olga, and several high functionaries, the Russian National Anthem being played by musicians at time. On reaching head of table, the Czar and Czarina are seated, while Olga and Count Storelki take a place several seats from them, and all are immediately seated. Czar rises to speak.]

CZAR. Your imperial highness, [Bowing to Czarina.] Nobles and ladies: this evening we celebrate the anniversary of her majesty's birth. On behalf of her imperial majesty, and for the exceeding loyalty and kindness shown us, I sincerely thank you. In the past we have endeavored to rule to please all. Although our efforts have been crowned with success, yet in the future we hope to so guide the welfare of Russia as to make her a great power in the deliberations of the affairs of Europe. Most illustrious guests, again we sincerely thank you. [Sits.]

COUNT SKOBELOFF. [Rising.] Your imperial majesties, nobles and ladies: I have the honor to convey to your majesties the loyalty and love of all Russia. Never in the annals of Russian history has she occupied such a prominent position in Europe, and her commerce so important a place, as at the present day. Love and quietness reigns throughout these vast dominions, and may they continue forever. We, your most gracious majesties, joyfully drink your healths. [Drinks.]

LORD OTTO BELL. Your majesties: by my most gracious sovereign, I am instructed to convey to her imperial majesty her Britannic majesty's most cordial congratulations.

COUNT VON WANGHEIM. Your imperial majesties: I have the honor to convey to you the sincere regards and congratulations of the Emperor and Empress of Germany.

SILVER. [Aside.] I guess I ought to congratulate them on behalf of the President of the United States, but I might get cashiered.

COUNT MELIKOFF. Most imperial Czar and Czarina: on behalf of the army and navy I convey to you their great love and loyalty, and that you may be long spared to reign over us.

COUNT STORELKI. Your most imperial majesties: on me devolves the most delicate task of this auspicious occasion. Its delicacy lies in my being the mouth-piece of our most fair and lovely ladies. Unless I convey to your majesties in a manner befitting my fair commissioners, their warmest and sincerest love—— Oh, God! [Placing hand to heart, and falls back dead.]

[Officers draw swords; all rise and look for a moment at each other in astonishment. Czar goes forward.]

CZAR. [Taking Count Storelki's hand.] He's ill! Quick! quick! bring a physician! Lanceroff! Hurry!

OLGA. [Aside.] My first victim. The greatest stroke is left for his master. [Turning to Czar.] Is he dead? He was talking quite merrily with me before he rose to congratulate your majesties. Poor, poor Count, how I will miss you!

Enter Dr. Lanceroff. (c.)

DR. LANCEROFF. Allow me. [Pushing back people in way.]

CZAR. Ah! Doctor, we require your assistance.

DR. LANCEROFF. No use! He is dead! Clear case of apoplexy! Too much blood!

SILVER. [Aside to Malcolm.] Too much blood! Too much poison! Eh?

MALCOLM. Shut up! Do you want to go to Siberia? Go back to America, you fool. We don't know what these fellows are after. Confound your stupid tongue, it will be the ruin of us.

SILVER. Jumping eagles, I forgot Siberia! But I——

MALCOLM. Shut up, or you'll get skewered with these swords.

CZAR. [To Lanceroff.] Doctor, what has caused our brave companion's death? If false means have been employed, by my empire, the wretch shall receive no pity. [Looks at Olga.]

LANCEROFF. [Kneeling over body.] Most mighty Czar, I am positive that the Count's death has resulted from apoplexy. Once I treated him through a severe attack of this disease, and warned him of excitement. To that I ascribe his sudden death.

CZAR. Remove the body, and give it burial befitting a prince. [Retires.]

OLGA. [Alone.] My life is saved! God let me be revenged before I lose my reason! His turn is next!

ACT IV.

SCENE—Olga's Boudoir in Winter Palace.

Enter Czar. (C.)

CZAR. [To Olga, who is reclining on sofa.] Now, your ladyship, I am here for the last time, to have a decided understanding between us. This life to me is intolerable. Instead of a woman, I have had the devil to deal with. You have studied continually to thwart my designs. Everything that lies within man's power to do, I have done. Could I do more? Could I give you that which was not mine to give? All Europe would have cried shame, and rebellion have stared me in the face. That was impossible! When I wedded you, I pictured the welcome with which you would receive me; the joy which would be mine; the love of one so fair, so young. Why so changed?

OLGA. [Reclining.] Proceed. I listen!

CZAR. Sarcastic as ever! But listen to me you shall, for I see you are determined to frustrate all my endeavors to make life happy to us both. I have watched your falsity step by step through these long years, and each tends to show the mistake I made in bringing you to this palace. Dark whispers have been associated with your name, and unhallowed deeds credited to your hands. Within the last few years you have made our Court notorious throughout Europe. Your very actions have made my ministers warn me of impending danger at your hands. Olga! for the love I bear you, speak and tell me that you are the Olga of my youthful love and joy! My old and only love!

OLGA. [Rising.] Man! Call not back the hurried past! Wake not up such tales of joy and love! Ah! love to me THEN, was as a dream! Now, it is an object to be feared! You, sir, ask for requited love! But no! Why should I continue in such a strain?

CZAR. Then you do not love me?

OLGA. Instead of love, sir, you wedded hate! Instead of a woman you married a fiend. Do I recall the time when you, the loved, the adored and respected of all Europe, entered and destroyed my father's home and broke my mother's heart? Do I remember the past, when you, with your silken tongue drove the love out of this heart; changed this girlish nature into hardened womanhood, and caused the finger of derision to be pointed at her? Did you love me then? Never! The fear of revenge made you attempt atonement too late!

CZAR. Woman! You dare thus to speak?

OLGA. Yes! Who gave me cause to hate you? Who has plotted against my life? Who has ordered my actions watched? Who offered the fairest province in Russia to the man who would accomplish my death? Can you answer me? No! Coward that you are!

CZAR. Have a care, or I will forget my love for you!

OLGA. Love? I loathe you! Was I not warned of your two-facedness? You came here to have an understanding—you will have it. Listen: When you

offered Count Storelki the fairest province in Russia to murder me, I was standing behind the curtains of the window. Every word you uttered, I noted. At the banquet God struck him dead through the medium of my hands. Your death shall be terrible, but not by my hands.

CZAR. [Jumping quickly to feet.] Woman! Devil! Is my life your next? Do your best. I laugh at you, for this day your life will be forfeited. Your malignant spirit will soon scoff no more. [Olga laughs.] By heaven, I'll stamp you under my heel! [Attempts to lay hands on her.]

OLGA. [Draws dagger.] Back, fool! I will bury this blade in your heart! One slight scratch, and not all the physicians of Europe can save your life. [Czar draws back whispering, "Poison!"] Yes, you draw back, you coward! I give you life, for the time has not yet come. Go! Attempt my life and you forfeit your own!

CZAR. [At entrance of door.] Yes, fell woman, your time has come. [Exit c.]

OLGA. Ah-ah-ha-ha-ha! This man, an emperor? He is without feeling, honor or love. Cruel and inflexible. His word is as dishonorable as his name.

Enter Floretta. (c.)

FLORETTA. [Excitedly.] Madam, dear madam! Have a care! Count Bubbleoff has been instructed to arrest you! Let us escape! Our friends outside this place will shelter us to the border!

OLGA. [Unconcernedly.] Where did his majesty go?

FLORETTA. For a drive.

OLGA. Leave me, girl! I will consider what is to be done. [Floretta retires.] So his treachery is at work again. My hand is more powerful than his. My friends more loyal. The time has arrived. Within this palace live, eat and sleep his murderers. At my call they come. [Pulls string, enter two Nihilists from closet.] Welcome Brothers!

NIHILIST NO. 1. Are we safe, madam?

OLGA. Would I have summoned you if otherwise? My news is good; in part bad. The time has come for your wrongs to be righted. The Czar has ordered my arrest, and gone for his drive. To you I give the honor of his death. Let him be killed this day. Do you understand?

NIHILIST NO. 1. Yes, madam, he shall die, or we perish in the attempt! What are you to do?

OLGA. I will remain here, and see your work. When opportunity offers execute the deed. Let it be a masterly work. Him, the enslaver of Russia, should die the death befitting such tyrants! Stay! Why not let the bombs be fired from the underground passages leading to the river? He will pass along the road approaching the royal stables. Let one be fired under the carriage as it passes, and the other, should the first fail. The bombs are fragile, and slight force will break them. What do you say, sirs? [They confer.]

NIHILIST NO. 1. We consider your last proposal the best. Will the wire under the causeway work to warn us of his approach?

OLGA. Has it not answered satisfactorily these months past? Fear it not. As his carriage passes the line, discharge the bomb from the catapult. The officers and police will, of course, arrest the wrong man, allowing you free. One

hundred thousand roubles are in the vault; take what is necessary and leave Russia. Fly to England or America! Depart now, for the time is near. [Exit Nihilists.] Brave men in an unworthy cause! Had not this tyrant heaped untold misery on my head for years, never would I instigate men to take his life!

Enter Count Bubbleoff and two soldiers. (C.)

COUNT BUBBLEOFF. Madam Olga Le Peon, by the order of his imperial majesty, the Czar of all the Russias, I am commanded to place you under arrest. You will, madam, prepare to accompany me to the prison of St. Peter and St. Paul.

OLGA. Most noble Count Bubbleoff, present your warrant for my apprehension. [Reaches out hand.]

COUNT BUBBLEOFF. I beg pardon, madam. There is no necessity for a warrant. It is his imperial majesty's commands personally to me.

OLGA. Seeing, noble Count, that it is Olga Le Peon, consort of the Czar of Russia, who demands that warrant, and you refuse to produce it, she orders you hence.

COUNT BUBBLEOFF. [To soldiers.] Arrest this woman! I will be answerable to his majesty!

OLGA. By this ring I defy you! Lay a hand on your empress and you die! [Soldiers fall back.]

COUNT BUBBLEOFF. Madam, I am sorry to use force.

OLGA. Sir Count, I order you to leave this room until his majesty returns, when he is able to issue a warrant for my arrest, then carry out your instructions. Kindly retire. Good afternoon, gentlemen!

COUNT BUBBLEOFF. [To soldiers.] Return to the barracks. Damn the women! [Exit.]

OLGA. What's that! The sound of thunder? An explosion! Have they succeeded? Another! The first must have failed! The second surely has taken effect! What a noise! The call to arms is sounding! The troops are hurrying! See how they surround the palace! What is that on the sleigh? Him! Not dead! He moves! Cursed fools for sparing his life! They rush here! What care I whether they come, now my revenge has been accomplished!

Sudden entrance of Count Nicholoff and soldiers. (C.)

COUNT NICHLOFF. Sieze this woman! Watch her closely! Search the room, and carry all papers away!

OLGA. Why this, sirs? Do you know who I am?

COUNT NICHLOFF. Silence, woman! You are the assassinator of the emperor.

OLGA. Me? [Indignantly.]

COUNT NICHLOFF. Madam, have you any papers?

OLGA. Two. My certificate of marriage to your emperor, and the certificate of his child's birth.

COUNT NICHLOFF. Give them to me. [Hands her papers. To soldiers.] Guard her to prison. [All retire.]

Enter Silver and Malcolm. (R.)

MALCOLM. Well, this is interesting. We are in for it! The emperor assassinated; Madam Le Peon arrested, and we in the palace.

SILVER. Better in it than out, seeing that we were likely to get pitch-forked by the soldiers. What are we going to do?

MALCOLM. Remain quiet until we get a chance to speak. Have you got your gate-pass and your credentials?

SILVER. I've got the gate-pass, but not the credentials.

MALCOLM. Confound you! Why the duce don't you carry your credentials about with you? Siberia for you this time sure!

SILVER. Oh, no! I am not going to Siberia to work for the Czar! I've been in many a pickle, but I guess none so blue-looking as this. Is the palace surrounded by soldiers?

MALCOLM. [Scornfully.] I should think it was! Even the city is full of them. Hark! There goes the minute guns. He's dead.

SILVER. Dead? Cuss my luck! Siberia stares me in the face! Let's see if there's a chance to escape. [Exit L.]

Enter Floretta. (C.)

FLORETTA. They have arrested my mistress and placed her in prison. If they keep her there twenty-four hours I am mistaken. She knows every secret passage and door in that prison. I could wager my life she will escape. What's that! Somebody in the closet. [Screams.]

Enter Olga, in irons.

OLGA. Hush! Quiet! What are you doing here?

FLORETTA. I don't know! Let us escape!

OLGA. No! Begone! Leave me here!

FLORETTA. Leave you? Never!

OLGA. But it is for the best. My life is spent. You have been a faithful companion to me. You have suffered much for my sake. I shall never be able to repay you. There, do not weep. I shall be happy then. Take this ring; it will insure your safety. Good-bye! God bless you! [Exit Floretta.] Now I am alone. The dampest cell they have consigned to me. Little they think I am familiar with the secrets of that vast home of miseries. To enter it is to die. A poison I must secret, for it will save me from a fellow's death. [Goes to drawer and takes out a quill.] Poison! With your awful subtleness perform your work well! Fail me not in my time of need! Some one comes!

Enter suddenly Count Bubbleoff and soldiers.

COUNT BUBBLEOFF. [Draws sword quickly.] Halt! [To soldiers.] Woman! [Astonished.] Why are you here? [Turning to soldiers.] Who has charge of this prisoner? Why was she not chained to the floor? Away with her and chain her in the deepest dungeon in the prison!

OLGA. [Soldiers attempt to lay hands upon her.] Back slaves! I will go! I fear not death!

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE—Chamber in Prison of St. Peter and St. Paul.

[Council chamber in which are gathered a military tribunal—Counts Nicholoff, Bubbleoff, Stivoli, Pavilichi and Kurko seated around a table. R.]

COUNT NICHOLOFF. My lords, we are satisfied that this woman, Olga Le Peon, should be tried by this Military Court, for the part she has taken in the assassination of our late emperor. But whether we have the right to pass sentence of death on her, is for our present Czar to decide. This woman had received the greatest munificence from his late majesty. In one of his letters he leaves instructions that we apply the sum of 250,000 roubles for the benefit of his son by marriage to this woman. Apparently the child was left in the hands of Olga Le Peon's parents. If this son is alive it is our duty to carry out our late emperor's requests. Before proceeding further would it not be better to ascertain from the prisoner if her son is living?

COUNT BUBBLEOFF. Sir Count, my lords, from my experience in dealing with this woman we will have to exercise considerable caution.

COUNT NICHOLOFF. Undoubtedly, sir Count. Are we, my lords, of one opinion in this case? [All bow.] Then we will hear the prisoner. [Rings, and aide-camp enters.] Bring in the prisoner.

AIDE-CAMP. An order, my lord?

COUNT NICHOLOFF. Ah! Yes! [Writes.] Here! Delay not! [Exit aide-camp.] My lords, we must, by all means discover who carried out this woman's instructions, for at the time of the explosion she was in her apartments. Her maid has escaped. [Enter c. prisoner chained.] Count Stivoli, will you read the charge against this woman?

COUNT STIVOLI. We, the Counts Nicholoff, Bubbleoff, Stivoli, Pavilichi and Kurko, forming the highest Military Tribunal of Russia, are commanded by his imperial majesty of all the Russias to arrest, and give trial to Olga Le Peon for the assassination of his late imperial majesty, the Czar of all the Russias. We, therefore, meet in council and command the above Olga Le Peon to be brought to trial at this Court. Peter Nicholoff, Alexander Paul Bubbleoff, Nicholas Stivoli, Peter Paul Pavilichi, Alexander Kurko, Grand Military Council. [Sits.]

COUNT NICHOLOFF. Madam, having heard the charge, I now warn you that you must answer without hesitation all questions of whatever nature, put by this Court. It will be to your benefit to be truthful and straightforward in these answers. Your character before coming to this country is known to our Council. therefore, for the present, we wish not to touch upon that. First, we demand the names of your confederates in the late assassination!

OLGA. My lords, you demand from me the names of the assassins of my late husband? Why such demand? Was not my husband surrounded by his officers and guards? If they have failed to discover who his murderers are, then why ask me? Here I am, a weak and defenceless woman; loaded with chains; cast into the deepest and darkest of dungeons; half starved, no couch to rest upon but the bare, damp floor—brought here like a felon, and asked to name the assassins of my husband! Sirs, you wrong me when you ask such a question, and cast more misery into my already over-flowing cup of sorrow!

COUNT NICHOLOFF. Madam, this by-play of words avails you little, for here in a memorandum from his late majesty, he writes of your plotting against his noble life! Had you not escaped from your cell, these heavy chains and that dark dungeon would not have been placed to your lot.

OLGA. Sirs, instead of his late majesty writing that I plotted to assassinate him, it is the reverse! He lied! [All start.] You, my lords, are empowered to sit in judgment on me, and from your military calling, I am well aware that my death would be to your satisfaction!

COUNT STIVOLI. Madam, kindly withhold your opinion regarding this council. Let the subject be that upon which you are charged.

OLGA. What if I refuse to speak?

COUNT NICHOLOFF. You will then return to your dungeon until you break your vow. As we have not heard your answer to these charges, you would be wronging yourself to remain silent. You say that his late majesty plotted against your life? Kindly explain.

OLGA. Are you aware of my relationship to his majesty?

COUNT NICHOLOFF. So far as these papers explain, we are.

OLGA. When did these papers come into your possession, sir?

COUNT NICHOLOFF. A few minutes before the late Czar went for his fatal drive. They contain very full and important information regarding you and your son.

OLGA. [Aside.] I see my race is run! I have nothing now to live for! My parents dead, and me, their only daughter, an outcast! What need I care? [Turns to judges.] You shall know the man you call noble emperor! You shall know him as I KNEW him? Know his perfidy; his tyranny! Noble? No!

COUNT NICHOLOFF. Madam, confine yourself strictly to the accusations you have made against our late emperor.

OLGA. I carry you back, back into those happy days when he wooed and won my affections! Base traitor! Oh, let me shut those days of happiness out! Recall not those memories! Yes, I will recall them? My shame is little to the eyes of the world. Through his baseness I stand here. When I arrived in this city I was conducted to Count Storelki's private mansion. My nurse accompanied me with my child. I was shortly afterwards appointed lady-in-waiting to the empress. Their infant son was placed in my charge! The difference in ages varied but a few months. So like were they, that often I had been mistaken regarding which was Russia's future emperor! Seldom was their child out of my care, and very little attention did he receive from his parents.

COUNT NICHOLOFF. To whom was YOUR child known?

OLGA. To no person in the palace was my child's life known but my nurse-

The emperor, then Grand Duke, was becoming weary of me. When he became emperor he wished me dead. On the night of the banquet in honor of his royal consort's birthday he promised the fairest province in Russia to Count Storelki if he would kill me.

COUNT NICHOLOFF. Madam, be careful what you say!

OLGA. Every word I heard! His servant called in the aid of a notorious murderer, who promised to do the deed.

COUNT STIVOLI. My lords, this woman is mad!

OLGA. No, sirs! not mad! Do you remember, my lords, Count Storelki rising to congratulate their majesties? Do you remember how he fell dead? How the physician pronounced it apoplexy? Yes! Apoplexy by poison at my hands! [All start.] Start not! Startled you will be, and horrified before this council adjourns! I nursed your empress to her grave! Slow, subtle poison cured her of all suffering! [They draw swords!]

COUNT BUBBLEOFF. Traitoress! You shall die! [Approaching.]

COUNT NICHOLOFF. Halt, sir! Let her continue! [All replace swords.]

OLGA. YOU commanded me to speak! When I have finished, then do your worst! Ill-treated and denied by his majesty; scoffed at by his servants, my madness knew no bounds. An hour or two before his death he did assault me, and would have killed me, were it not for my dagger, whose poisoned blade drove the coward back with fear! His last threat was but my determination to end his life! I communicated with several noted Nihilists, who were concealed within the palace. My will, my word, was law to them. His majesty's life they looked for most. At my command they killed him, and are by this time beyond reach. Their names I know not.

COUNT NICHOLOFF. Madam, is this to be relied upon? Then you do not know the names of your assistants in this dastardly crime?

OLGA. Sir Count, why should I speak falsely, knowing you have already sentenced me to death? Did I know THEIR NAMES my word of honor is dearer to me than life,

COUNT NICHOLOFF. Then Madam—— [Sudden ringing of bell.] Ah! traitors! [All spring to feet, and draw swords.] Even in the prison! [Enter Aide-camp with note.] No fear, my lords, only an American and Englishman caught within the palace walls. Let them be brought in. Maybe they will be able to throw light on this affair. [Replace swords.]

OLGA. [Aside.] Fools, these men!

Enter Silver and Malcolm guarded.

COUNT NICHOLOFF. Ah! Both in the diplomatic service! Gentlemen, [To prisoners.] Why here?

SILVER. [Aside.] Siberia this time! Oh, Siberia!

MALCOLM. My lords, at the time of this unhappy occurrence we happened to be in the palace. My friend here had forgotten his credentials, and knowing the difficulties which surrounded us, we attempted to leave. That is all, sirs.

COUNT NICHOLOFF. We are satisfied, gentlemen, with your answer. You may retire, and my secretary will see to pass-ports.

SILVER. [Aside.] Saved again!

OLGA. No, sirs, remain! I command you to be witnesses of this unjust trial.

COUNT NICHOLOFF. Gentlemen, kindly retire.

OLGA. Retire, and you leave me at the mercy of these men! This Military Tribunal, whose only justice is the sword!

COUNT NICHOLOFF. Gentlemen, withdraw. [Exit Malcolm and Silver.]

OLGA. [Aside.] Why need I now hope? My heart is broken! I wish to die! I feel the tears of weak womanhood rising to my eyes! [Aloud.] My crimes to you are terrible, but to me are a just revenge! You have asked me where my son is! Do you command it? [Takes poison.]

COUNT NICHOLOFF. We do, madam!

OLGA. My lords, with these dying lips I swear wretched Olga Le Peon's son is your king! [All jump to feet and draw swords.] Hold! The children I changed in the cradle! He's gone! Your king! My son reigns! Speed on sweet nectar from the serpent's womb! Poison, save me from the executioner's sword! He reigns! Oh, God!]Falls dead.]

THE END.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

MONS. LE PEON.

MADAM LE PEON.

OLGA LE PEON.

FLORETTA, (Olga's Maid.)

MADAM CARGNAC, (Olga's Nurse.)

JOSEPH, (Servant.)

COUNT STORELKI, (Grand Duke's Confidential Servant.)

GRAND DUKE ALEXIS }
CZAR OF RUSSIA. }

CZARINA OF RUSSIA.

DR. LANCEROFF.

NIHILIST NO. 1.

COUNT BUBBLEOFF, (Captain of Guard.)

COUNT NICHOLOFF, (Commander-in-Chief of Army.)

COUNT STIVOLI, (Clerk of Military Tribunal.)

COUNT PAVILICHI, (Member of Military Tribunal.)

COUNT KURKO, (Member of Military Tribunal.)

ATKINS MALCOLM, (Clerk in British Diplomatic office.)

JOHN SILVER, (Clerk in American Diplomatic office.)

LORD BELL, (British Ambassador at St. Petersburg.)

COUNT VON WANGHEIM, (German Ambassador at St. Petersburg.)

COUNT MELIKOFF, (Minister*of War.)

COUNT SKOBEOFF, (Minister of Foreign Affairs.)

AIDE-CAMP.

SOLDIERS, ETC.



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